



VIP2VIP



Season: 4 Volume 1

Big Bend National Park's Volun-

CURRENT VOLUNTEERS

PERSIMMON GAP

Mark Kirtley- Interpretation
Bob & Sally Jones- Interpretation

RIO GRANDE VILLAGE

Bill & Barbara Baldwin- Campground Hosts
Royce & Royann Brockett- Campground Hosts
John & Gail Kamaras- Interpretation
Bob & Lynda Fanning- Interpretation
Erv & Sam Drabek- Backcountry

CHISOS BASIN

Jim & Ginny Herrick- Interpretation
Bob & Carol Schemm- Campground Hosts
Dennis & Mary Lou Leeder- Campground Hosts

CASTOLON

Whitney Hibbard and Samantha Schroeder-
Backcountry and Campground Host
Steve Harper- Backcountry & Campground Host
Nancy Bauer- Interpretation
Gary Stevens & Nan Wilson- Interpretation;

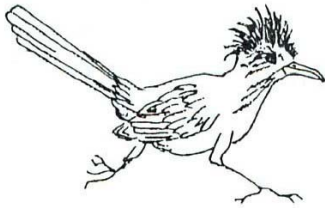
PANTHER JUNCTION

Bob Thomson- Volunteer Coordinator's Assistant
Nathan Dammeyer- Interpretation - SCA
Kim Miller- Interpretation - SCA
Danielle Norris- Interpretation - SCA
Bob & Scarlett Wirt- Science and Resource
Management
Gary & Diane Frable - River

Part-time Volunteers

Judy Brinkerhoff- Science and Resource Management
John Davies- Visitor and Resource Protection
Meghan Hicks- Interpretation
Steve Wick- Science and Resource Management

**This newsletter is devoted to the
volunteers who work at Rio Grande
Village and Persimmon Gap.**



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★ Congratulations ★
★ to new volunteers ★
★ for completing ★
★ Orientation ★
★ Training ★
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Mr. Skiles on
animal behavior



Mr. Corrick on
Big Bend's natural
history

Mr. Thompson
giving a tour
of Casolon



Mr. Bennett is
very informative
on water quality



Mr. Dean explains
the vegetation of
Rio Grande Village





Erv & Sam Drabek
Rio Grande Village –
Backcountry

Big Bend welcomes Erv and Sam back for their third season. When not here they're busy volunteering

for our national forests. They travel about as full time RVers.

This past summer they completed their 12th year working for the US Forest Service. As wildlife biologist technicians, they were busy in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. They conducted bird surveys and banded eagles. They were also famous for talking to the public on the return of the wolf.

Last winter, they worked in Florida for the Ocala National Forest. There they patrolled using an ATV 30-40 miles daily. They enforced rule compliance through education.

When asked if they have an interesting story to share—Erv immediately responded with this story. While examining a nest, he was attacked by a hawk! It tore his hat off. But was able to escape being injured by hiding behind a tree.

Bob & Sally Jones
Persimmon Gap – Visitor Center

Though Bob and Sally spent their first two years at Big Bend as campground hosts in the Basin, this season they are trying something new. For their first time ever, they are meeting guests in a visitor center, which is something they really enjoy. Their very friendly personalities are welcoming guests as they enter our lovely park. So make a point to stop into the visitor center before the end of January to see them in action.



The best part of the job to Sally and Bob is the opportunity to express their love for this park. Visitors have a wide variety of questions when they first arrive. But then, when these same individuals are just about to leave the park, they again stop in the center to express their excitement of what they had seen.

Bob and Sally spent last summer visiting their hometown area of San Antonio, where they met family and friends as Bob recuperated from cataract surgery.

John & Gail Kamaras
Rio Grande Village – Visitor Center



It's good to see the return of the Kamaras. They are an interesting couple. This is their 3rd season. They will be here until the end of January.

One interesting thing about them is all the traveling they have done this summer. They visited Las Vegas, Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, Salt Lake City, the Olympic Peninsula, Seattle, Oregon and northern California.

Be sure to talk with them to hear their stories about: why they found Bryce Canyon to be the most beautiful national park they have seen; what they did for a week on the breath taking Columbia River Gorge; why they think the artwork at Mount Hood is the neatest; why their greatest enjoyment was whale and sea lion watching on the coast of Oregon; or where they would like to return to do crabbing.

Mark Kirtley
Persimmon Gap-Visitor Center

Big Bend is very grateful to Mark as this is his 8th season here! We especially enjoy his free spirited personality which he shares with our park visitors. Stop by the visitor center at Persimmon Gap now to the end of January. Then make a second visit to the visitor center at Castolon where he will be found February through April of 2005.



Mark frequently spends his summer hiking and last summer was no exception. He did cross country hiking at the Grand Canyon and at the Gila National Forest & Wilderness. But his biggest delight was hiking in Glacier National Park where he either slept in his car or under the stars and hitchhiked between trail heads.

Mark remembers his favorite job ever: doing laundry and folding sheets with associates years earlier at East Glacier. He learned how friendly people can be who work for the national parks. They would play games and sing songs while working, making an otherwise boring job pleasurable.

Special Thanks to Our Volunteers

During each Thanksgiving season, the current author of this newsletter takes time to personally give recognition to the most outstanding contribution he has witnessed during the past year. This year, I am recognizing the special contributions of "full time national park volunteers"!

These are energetic individuals who contributes countless hours to the betterment of the national parks. These volunteers basically perform jobs which the regular personnel never have

time to accomplish.

Though they usually receive a RV site with hookups, or an apartment with utilities, for a minimum of 32 hours per week of work, these volunteers gladly perform their duties out of their interest in the welfare of the parks..

For all their hard work, I give my greatest appreciation to our park's volunteers.

Bob Thomson

Welcoming Our New Volunteers

& Lynda Fanning Rio Grande Village – Visitor Center

Bob

Bob grew up in upper state New York and later attended RPI in Troy where he studied engineering. While serving in the Air Force he became a pilot. This leads the way for him to have an interesting career flying aircraft for US Airways as a captain.

Lynda had a great experience of attending elementary school in a one room school house in Colorado. There she was greatly teased since she was the only girl. She moved often as her father was a miner. She later attended the University of Wisconsin and obtained a master degree in education from SUNY, State University of New York. This opened the door for her to work as a high school English teacher.

But life really began for them when they married 42 years ago. They were later blessed with four kids, (3 boys and a girl). Today they have one granddaughter who keeps them forever young.

They make their home in Spearfish, SD, located on the northern edge of the Black Hills. There they enjoy gardening.

They also enjoy traveling and have visited such countries as Spain, Portugal, Greece, Ireland, Norway and Germany.

Hiking has also been one of their interest while visiting several western US parks.

They retired 13 years ago and have had several enjoyable experiences since. They especially like serving in the visitor center and are looking forward to volunteering in other parks in the near future.

Updates on Returning Volunteers

Bill & Barbara Baldwin

Rio Grande Village – Campground Hosts

Bill and Barbara have been working at Big Bend longer than any other volunteer. They have honored our lovely park for 13 seasons.



To Barbara and Bill, the best part about working in Big Bend is the peacefulness and warmer weather in comparison to their home. They also like seeing the friends they have made.

Relationships are important to them as indicated by them spending last summer visiting family in Oklahoma and Kansas. They share six kids which have blessed them with 13 grandchildren

One special delightful experience they had was camping with their family for two weeks at Lake Eufala, OK. They enjoyed swimming and boating.

Royce & Royann Brockett Rio Grande Village – Campground Hosts

The Brocketts have been very devoted to Big Bend as they begin their 6th season here.

They shared a very meaningful time visiting their two sons and their family during last summer. One lives in Fort Hood, Texas and the other in Fort Riley, Kansas. Both are in the army.

Their most interesting stories are the various accounts of the “attacks of the javelinas”!

They describe how javelinas actually unzip tents and enter in search of candy and other camper’s snacks. As a result, Royce and Royann always make a point to inform campers of proper food storage.



Activities & Events

Holiday Auction- Dec. 2 at 6:00 pm,- PJ
Community Room

VIP Potluck- Dec. 6 from 6:30 till 9:00 pm - PJ
Community Room.

Holiday Dinner- Dec. 14 at 5:30-6:00pm Santa;
6:00-6:30pm social; 6:30pm dinner - PJ
Community Room (be sure to sign up)

School Play- Dec. 16 at 6:00pm - See K -8
grades live performance for free!

Ongoing:

Sunday Worship Service- Nondenominational

All are welcome to join our volunteer, Dr. John Kamaras, at the Rio Grande Village's Amphitheater for 35-45 min. of worship beginning at 4:00 pm each Sunday. (No offering will be taken).

Check the Bulletin Board at PJ for Details and Updates!

Volunteer Notes

Be sure to submit your **Record of Hours Worked** report each month to the VIP Coordinator. Reports are due no later than the third of each month!

Looking for ways to get in the holiday spirit? Help the community get ready by assisting with the upcoming Holiday Auction and the Holiday Dinner. If interested see Claudia or sign up on the list found on the bulletin board at PJ.

